

### **R E M A R K S**

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

### **THE CLAIMS**

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the features of the present invention whereby the point calculation section calculates points for each of a plurality of analysis-determination items used to analyze and determine the complaint, such that for each of the analysis-determination items, the point calculation section analyzes the product information and assigns a number of points for the analysis-determination item based on a result of the product information analysis by consulting a table in which respective numbers of points are assigned to respective value ranges for the result of the product information analysis. See Figs. 4-11. In addition, claim 1 has also been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby the rank assignment section assigns a rank to the complaint based on: the points totaled by said point calculation section and a rank assignment table in which respective ranks are assigned to point ranges. See Fig. 13. Still further, claim 1 has been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby the point ranges assigned to the ranks in the rank assignment table are

changeable. See the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 17, lines 18-20.

Claim 3 has been amended to incorporate and more clearly recite the subject matter of claim 2.

Method claims 20 and 22 have been amended in a similar manner to claims 1 and 3.

Claims 1, 3-20 and 22-30, moreover, have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems to put them in better U.S. form.

Claims 31-41 have been canceled, and claims 42-51 have been added based on the subject matter of claims 31 and 33-41, revised along the lines of claims 20 and 22-30.

And claims 52-54 have been added, depending from claims 3, 22 and 43, respectively, to positively recite the feature of individually changing the weight set for at least one of the analysis-determination items, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 21, line 24 to page 22, line 1.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

#### THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-3, 20-22, and 31-33 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 6,591,258 ("Stier et al"); and

claims 4-19, 23-30 and 34-41 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of Stier et al. These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to the claims set forth hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, the point calculation section calculates points for each of a plurality of analysis-determination items used to analyze and determine the complaint, such that for each of the analysis-determination items, the point calculation section analyzes the product information and assigns a number of points for the analysis-determination item based on a result of the product information analysis by consulting a table in which respective numbers of points are assigned to respective value ranges for the result of the product information analysis. Then, as recited in claim 1, the points are totaled, and the rank assignment section assigns a rank to the complaint based on: the points totaled by said point calculation section and a rank assignment table in which respective ranks are assigned to point ranges. In addition, according to the present invention as recited in amended claim 1, the point ranges assigned to the ranks in the rank assignment table are changeable. Amended independent claim 20 and new independent claim 42, moreover, recite the same subject matter in method and computer program/storage medium form, along the lines of amended claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that Stier et al does not disclose, teach or suggest a table in which respective numbers of points are assigned to respective value ranges for the result of the product information analysis, or a rank assignment table in which respective ranks are assigned to point ranges, wherein the point ranges assigned to the ranks in the rank assignment table are changeable, as according to the present invention as recited in independent claims 1, 20 and 42.

It is respectfully submitted, moreover, that Stier et al does not disclose, teach or suggest changing a weight for weighting the points calculated for an analysis-determination item in the total of counted points, as recited in new dependent claims 52-54, depending from claims 3, 22 and 43. With this structure, it is possible to perform rank assignment with a weight increased on any one of the analysis-determination items considered to be important by an operator of all of the analysis-determination items.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 20, new independent claim 42, and claims 3-19, 22-30 and 43-54 respectively depending therefrom, clearly patentably distinguishes over Stier et al, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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